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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/032,893	10/26/2001	Fabio Casati	10010315	8306

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HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY
Intellectual Property Administration
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EXAMINER

ALI, SYED J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2195

DATE MAILED: 11/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/032,893

Applicant(s)

CASATI ET AL.

Examiner

Syed J. Ali

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 September 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the amendment filed September 12, 2005. Claims 1-27 are presented for examination.
2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. code not included in this office action can be found in a prior office action.

Specification

3. The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609 A(1) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Du et al. (USPN 6,308,163) (hereinafter Du).
5. As per claim 1, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including a method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow comprising:

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defining a plurality of nodes, wherein said nodes are tasks to be executed within said workflow (col. 12 lines 46-57);

defining said resources for execution of said nodes (col. 12 line 57 - col. 13 line 6);

storing a set of data items having variables pertaining to execution of said workflow (col. 13 lines 15-19); and

assigning said resources to said nodes for execution thereof in accordance with a set of rules, said set of rules for controlling the execution of said workflow (col. 5 lines 15-22; col. 8 lines 53-60).

6. As per claim 2, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with an execution history of said workflow (col. 8 lines 53-60).

7. As per claim 3, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with said set of data items (col. 13 lines 21-26).

8. As per claim 4, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with time, wherein said time is relative to the execution of said nodes, and wherein said time is relative to the execution of said workflow, and wherein said time is relative to absolute time (col. 10 lines 61-64; col. 11 lines 17-25).

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9. As per claim 5, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based upon an event/action criteria and wherein said rules are based upon an event/condition/action criteria (col. 10 lines 61-64; col. 11 lines 5-6, 8-15, 17-25).

10. As per claim 6, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are defined in accordance with a common language used for the entire workflow and used for assigning said resources to nodes (col. 13 lines 30-37).

11. As per claim 7, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said resources executing said nodes are agents (col. 1 lines 35-46).

12. As per claim 8, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 further comprises pre-computed authorizations, and wherein said authorizations are applied to said resources and wherein said authorizations are maintained in an up-to-date manner, such that a set of authorizes resources is easily retrievable concurrent with an initiated task (col. 3 lines 10-16, 39-42, 56-66).

13. As per claim 9, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are Boolean expressions (col. 12 lines 51-53; col. 13 lines 3-6).

14. As per claim 10-18, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including a computer system in a computer network, said computer system comprising:

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a bus, a memory unit coupled to said bus, and a processor coupled to said bus, said processor for executing the method of claims 1-9 (Fig. 1).

15. As per claims 19-27, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including a computer-readable medium for storing computer-implemented instructions, said instructions for causing a computer system to perform the method of claims 1-2 (Fig. 1).

Response to Arguments

16. **Applicant's arguments filed September 12, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.**

17. Applicants submit that Du fails to teach the first and fourth steps of representative claim 1, i.e. "defining a plurality of...tasks to be executed within [a] workflow" and "assigning...resources to [tasks] for execution thereof in accordance with a set of rules." In support of this argument, Applicant alleges that Du *"does not focus on the manner in which resources are assigned and certainly does not teach or suggest that as a part of a resource assignment process itself: (1) a plurality of task are defined (as opposed to being defined beforehand), (2) resources for execution of the task are defined and (3) resources are assigned to these tasks according to a set of rules for controlling the execution of the workflow."*

18. Du's alleged failure to teach the first two elements of Applicants' argument is easily dismissed. The structure of the claim does not support Applicants' contention that the definition of both tasks and their resources occurs as part of the assignment process itself. A careful

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reading of the claim reflects the more plausible position of the tasks, their resources, and data items pertaining to execution being defined before the resource assignment process. The claim, as a whole, is directed to a method of assigning resources to tasks. The method is broken up into four steps: (1) defining tasks within a workflow; (2) defining resources for executing those tasks; (3) storing data pertaining to the execution of the workflow; and (4) assigning resources to tasks based on a set of rules that control the execution of the workflow. It is clear that the first three steps occur before any assignment process. Thus, the first two arguments presented by Applicant are summarily rejected, as the claim language does not support the alleged deficiency of Du.

19. As for Applicants' last argument, it is clear that Du teaches the feature of assigning resources to tasks in accordance with a set of rules. First, Du refers to the tasks (or nodes) of the workflow as "activities". The resources are then assigned to the activities by way of "roles", which are "logical representations of resource requirements for workflow activities", e.g. "a boolean expression specifying the resource types needed for the activity." (col. 12 lines 46-62). "Roles" is clearly a type of "rules", and are created expressly for the purpose of "map[ping] activities into resources." (col. 12 lines 46-62) Thus, there is no doubt that Du identically teaches each feature of the claimed invention, in spite of slight differences in lexicography.

Conclusion

20. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

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MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Syed J. Ali whose telephone number is (571) 272-3769. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8-5:30, 2nd Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng-Ai T. An can be reached on (571) 272-3756. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Syed Ali
November 9, 2005



MENG-AI T. AN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNICAL CENTER